



METRO MAPLES

December 2018 Newsletter



GIFT CERTIFICATES

The perfect gift for the tree lover in your life!

'BABY DRAGON'

Our featured variety this month is a weeping dwarf Shantung maple discovered at Metro Maples.

WINTER CARE

Answers to frequently asked questions as temperatures begin to drop.

GIFT CERTIFICATES!

If you're searching for the perfect gift for a gardening fanatic, we happily offer gift certificates in any denomination.

If you'd prefer to give a tree you've picked out yourself, we have a few thousand trees in 1, 2 and 3 gallon pots for \$25, \$35, and \$45; and a wide variety of larger trees in stock.

As we'll cover below, our trees are quite winter hardy here in Texas and will make excellent gifts your loved ones will enjoy throughout the year.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to give us a call at 817-797-3419.





'BABY DRAGON'

Acer truncatum 'Baby Dragon' was discovered by Metro Maples founder, Keith Johansson in 1994, and has proven to be a terrific performer in even the hottest Texas summers.

'Baby Dragon' is a weeping dwarf Shantung maple that grows exceptionally well in full Texas sun and provides an excellent alternative to the more shade-loving weeping Japanese maple cultivars. While Japanese maples will tend to slow their growth when temperatures regularly exceed 95 degrees, 'Baby Dragon' doesn't slow down at all, and will continue to push new leaves through September.

Like all maples, 'Baby Dragon' is deciduous, meaning its leaves will drop in December and new leaves will begin to grow in early April. The leaves emerge a purplish burgundy, but will fade quickly to green. Fall color is a bright yellow with the occasional splash of red.

Shantungs are native to China, and are highly adaptable. They are tolerant of alkaline soils, hot summers, cold winters, and have little in the way of litter -- no nuts, berries, beans, or cones. Just some small 'helicopter' seeds that drop in the winter along with the leaves.

If left to its own devices, 'Baby Dragon' will grow fairly quickly into a densely layered mound about 8-10' tall and wide but can be easily shaped and pruned into a variety of silhouettes. They can be trained up tall, thinned to provide a more layered and elegant look, and can even be grown as bonsai as shown above. The quick and steady growth rate makes this a very forgiving tree that recovers quickly from pruning and takes all manner of adversity in stride.



We currently have trees in 2, 5, 7, and 15 gallon sizes available for purchase.

WINTER CARE

Winter is coming, and with it comes many questions from anxious gardeners about how to best take care of their maple trees, so we thought we'd include a few tips to help set your mind at ease.

COLD - Japanese maples are hardy to USDA Zone 5-6 (e.g. Chicago). DFW is Zone 8a, so there's no need to insulate your trees or bring them indoors. Even trees grown in pots should survive winter temperatures here, provided they're setting on the ground.

WATER - As maples drop their leaves for the winter, their water needs also drop significantly. You won't need to water your trees unless we have a prolonged dry spell of more than a couple of weeks.



PRUNING - The dormant season is a great time to prune your maples. Here are the basics:

1. Remove any dead branches (they'll be white or gray, and brittle)
2. Where two branches are crossing and rubbing, keep one and remove one.
3. Remove any branches that are impeding walkways or obstructing views.
4. It's best to prune a little bit each year, removing younger growth a little at a time.

TRANSPLANTING - The dormant season is also the best time to move your tree. By moving it in winter, you greatly reduce the chances of shock, and you give the tree ample time to grow roots in its new location so it can drink up plenty of water in spring and summer.

FERTILIZING - There's no need to fertilize your tree until early spring. Texas soils have plenty of nutrition for maples to grow roots through the winter. It is only when the leaf buds begin to swell that the tree will benefit from a light feeding of a balanced slow-release fertilizer.



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